provided by Indian Council of Medical Research, the Council carried out a number of research studies on different aspects related to Methyl Isocyanate (MIC) exposure during 1985-94. The Council then handed over the data accrued and the infrastructure to the Department of Madhya Pradesh Gas Rehabilitation Centre, Government of Madhya Pradesh.

Initially there was a ban on publication of the findings of research studies related to MIC exposure. Once the ban on publication was lifted, there were many publications which emerged from various studies and were presented at different scientific conferences.

Ban on sale of fast food and cold drinks in canteens

†2515. SHRI RAMA SHANKER KAUSHIK: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government on the basis of the research study report of AIIMS, propose total ban to be imposed upon the sale of fast food and cold drinks in the canteens of all the Central Universities, as well as in all the colleges and educational institutions being run by Government;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor and Government's reaction to the research report of the AIIMS and the action likely to be taken by Government?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ): (a) to (c) All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) is conducting a trial study on fatness, cholesterol disorder and other life style factors in adolescent and young adult population. This is an on going study and final conclusions have not been arrived at. At present the conclusion is that both lack of physical activity and adverse diet may be the contributory factors for excess body fat and related disorders.

Canteens in most educational institutions sell fast food and cold drinks in addition to traditional food items. These products have both taste as well as natritive value.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

There is no proposal to ban sale of fast food and cold drinks in canteens of educational institutions. It is always the endeavour of the Government to promote healthy life styles which also includes proper food nutrition.

Amendments to the drugs and cosmetics act

2516. SHRI DATTA MEGHE: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that the Drugs and Cosmetics Act is ineffective to deal with the various crimes relating to manufacture and sale of spurious drugs;

(b) if so, whether the NCT Government of Delhi has urged Government to bring suitable amendments in the Drugs and Cosmetics Act to check such crimes; and

(c) if so, the reaction of Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ): (a) No, Sir. Under the Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940, severe penalties have been prescribed for manufacture and sale of spurious drugs and the offences are punishable with imprisonment for a term which shall not be less than 5 years but which may extend to a term of life and with fine which shall not be less than Rs. 10,000/-.

(b) and (c) Yes, Sir. Government of India has set up an expert committee on January 27, 2003 under the Chairmanship of Dr. R.A. Mashalkar, DG, CSIR and Secretary to Government of India to undertake a comprehensive review of the drugs regulatory system in the country including evaluation of the extent of spurious and sub-standard drugs, to effectively tackle the problem of spurious drugs and to recommend measures to be taken in this regard.

Asthma patients in Mumbai

2517. SHRI SANJAY NIRUPAM: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the number of Asthma patients is increasing in Mumbai city;